

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FRP: , , 3, , , , 8

25X1

STATE

83 0863220 SCR

PAGE 001

NC 0863220

TOR: 010328Z APR 83

RR RUEAIIB

ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH

UTS3388

RR RUEHC

DE RUFH LG #0802/01 0901417

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

R 311412Z MAR 83

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9866

INFO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9993

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L LENINGRAD 00802

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: ECPS, KPRP, PREL, PROP, SCUL, UR

SUBJ: ANTI-AMERICAN ATTITUDES ON THE RISE  
- IN LENINGRAD

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. THIS REPORT IS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF  
ITEM B-2 OF OUR ANNUAL REPORTING PLAN.

3. SUMMARY. ON THE BASIS OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US IN LENINGRAD, THE TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN GOOD-WILL TOWARD AMERICANS AND ADMIRATION OF OUR KNOW-HOW SEEMS TO BE ERODING. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT PUBLIC ATTITUDES HAVE A STRICTLY LIMITED INFLUENCE ON THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP, WE NEVERTHELESS CONSIDER IT IN OUR LONG-RANGE INTEREST TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE SOVIET REGIME AND THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE IN OUR POLICY AND ACTIVITIES. END SUMMARY.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

83 0863220 SCR

PAGE 002  
TOR: 010328Z APR 83

NC 0863220

-----  
 AMERICAN POPULARITY, SOVIET PROPAGANDA AND THE  
 -----  
 RUSSIAN COLLECTIVE TRADITION  
 -----

4. RUSSIA IS A LAND OF PARADOXES. ONE OF THE MOST PUZZLING IS THAT AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN POPULAR IN THE U.S.S.R., DESPITE CONSTANT ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA AND AN HISTORICAL TRADITION QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OURS. OVER THE YEARS, ONE COULD ASK ALMOST ANY RUSSIAN WHAT HE THOUGHT OF AMERICANS AND HE WOULD RECEIVE A VERY POSITIVE REPLY. THEY HAVE ADMIRERD OUR TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT EVEN MORE, OUR INFORMALITY, OUR INNOVATIVE, GET-THE-JOB-DONE SPIRIT, AND, MOST OF ALL, OUR OPEN, UNAFFECTED AMIABILITY. THIS HAS BEEN TRUE, EVEN THOUGH THEIR WAY OF LIFE IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM OURS. RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM IS ALIEN TO THEIR NATURE. SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL THEY HAVE BEEN A "COLLECTIVE" SOCIETY. THE INFLUENCE OF THE TARTAR "YOKE", THE ORTHODOX FAITH, THE PEASANT COMMUNE AND THE VILLAGE HOUSEHOLD MOULDED A SOCIETY IN WHICH RESPONSIBILTIIY WAS SHARED AND THE GOVERNMENT REGARDED AS A THING APART, HEADED BY AN AUTOCRAT CALLED THE "LITTLE FATHER".

5. TORN BETWEEN EAST AND WEST--IN FACT SITTING ASTRIDE THE VERY DEMARCATION OF EUROPE AND ASIA, RUSSIA HAS ALTERNATED BETWEEN PERIODS OF OPENNNNESS TO THE WEST AND OF XENOPHOBIA. BOTH QUALITIES ARE PART OF THE RUSSIAN CHARACTER. THIS IS WHY IT IS SO DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY RUSSIANS OFTEN CLAIM THAT THEY WANT TO BE LIKE US. THEY EVEN TRY TO SEE PARALLELS IN THEIR CONQUERING OF SIBERIA AND OUR TAMING OF THE WILD WEST. THERE MAY BE SUPERFICIAL SIMILARITIES, BUT NO SOVIET "TURNER" HAS EVER CLAIMED THE FRONTIER AS A CATALYST FOR LIBERAL DEMOCRACY. THE UGLY AMERICAN--THE PROPAGANDA MACHINE FINALLY  
 -----  
 HITS A RESPONSIVE CHORD  
 -----

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

83 0863220 SCR

PAGE 003

NC 0863220

TOR: 010328Z APR 83

6. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IN LENINGRAD, THIS RESERVOIR OF GOOD WILL AND ADMIRATION IS STARTING TO RUN DRY. IF AMERICANS WERE DISILLUSIONED BY "DETENTE", THE SOVIETS HAD THEIR HOPES DASHED AS WELL. FOR THEM, "DETENTE" MEANT MORE CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD, MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THEIR DAILY LIVES, MORE CREATURE COMFORTS, ACCEPTANCE BY THE WEST AND, MOST OF ALL, MORE SECURITY. IT CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED THAT, FOR THE PEOPLE OF LENINGRAD, THE 900-DAY BLOCKADE WAS A LASTING TRAUMA. TYPICAL ARE THE MEMORIES OF THE DOORMAN AT A LOCAL RESTAURANT, WHO LOST HIS ENTIRE FAMILY TO STARVATION AND EXPOSURE, AND WHO TELLS OF THE CORPSES LYING ON THE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS OF THE SURROUNDED CITY DAY AFTER DAY. FOR THESE PEOPLE, PRESIDENT NIXON HIT JUST THE RIGHT NOTE WHEN DURING HIS 1972 VISIT HE CITED THE TRAGIC STORY OF THE SMALL GIRL TANYA AND HER DIARY, ADDING THE HOPE THAT NO OTHER TANYAS WOULD AGAIN HAVE TO SUFFER THE RAVAGES OF WAR.

7. WHEN I ARRIVED HERE LAST AUGUST I REPORTED BEING ESPECIALLY STRUCK BY THE CAUSTIC TONE OF THE MEDIA, AND BY THE AD HOMINEM NATURE OF THE ANTI-U.S. PROPAGANDA. THE SOVIET PRESS, RADIO AND TV HAVE INVARIABLY BEEN AIMED PRIMARILY AT US, BUT THEY HAVE NOT ALWAYS SINGLED OUT THE PERSON OF THE PRESIDENT. THIS RUBICON HAS BEEN CROSSED BEFORE, DURING THE LATTER STAGE OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR EXAMPLE,

BUT THE SOVIET INVECTIVE HAS REACHED A NEW INTENSITY SINCE LAST SUMMER. SOVIET MEDIA HAVE BEEN UNRELENTING IN CHARACTERIZING THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ADMINISTRATION AS BENT ON DESTROYING THE SOVIET LAND AND ITS PEOPLE BY ANY MEANS, INCLUDING NUCLEAR WAR. THIS CAMPAIGN SEEMS FINALLY TO BE HAVING AN EFFECT. THE LENINGRAD MAN IN THE STREET APPEARS TO BE GROWING LESS WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD AMERICA AND AMERICANS. HE IS RESENTFUL OF THE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT, AS HE WAS OF THE OLYMPIC ONE. APPEALING TO THE LATENT RUSSIAN SUSPICION OF FOREIGNERS, THE SOVIET LEADERS SEEM TO BE SUCCEEDING IN THEIR EFFORT TO SOW DOUBTS IN THE MINDS OF THE POPULACE ABOUT OUR

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

83 0863220 SCK

PAGE 004  
TOR: 010328Z APR 83

NC 0863220

INTENTIONS AND OUR COMMITMENT TO A PEACEFUL WORLD.  
8. THESE FEELINGS, WHEN SET AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF UNCERTAINTY AND APPREHENSION OVER ANDROPOV'S CALL FOR A DOMESTIC CRACKDOWN, HAVE LED TO INSTANCES OF SPONTANEOUS HOSTILITY TOWARD AMERICANS--SOMETHING THAT HASN'T BEEN WITNESSED FOR SOME TIME. SOME OF OUR STUDENTS ARE FINDING THEMSELVES OSTRACISED BY THEIR RUSSIAN COLLEAGUES. VISITING SCHOLARS, WHO HAVE OVER THE YEARS DEVELOPED CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS, HAVE BEEN DISMAYED TO FIND THEMSELVES SHUNNED DURING RECENT VISITS. OF COURSE, CARE MUST BE TAKEN TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE RESULTS OF SOVIET INTIMIDATION--PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS AND THE FEW DISSIDENTS THAT REMAIN--FROM THE TRUE FEELINGS THESE PEOPLE HAVE TOWARD US.

9. GENERALITIES CAN BE MISLEADING, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY DEAL WITH PEOPLES' ATTITUDES. OBVIOUSLY, OFFICIALS AND OTHERS WITH A STAKE IN THE REGIME ARE CONSISTENTLY GOING TO REGARD THE U.S. AS "THE MAIN ENEMY", WHILE THE DISAFFECTED WILL LOOK TO OUR COUNTRY AS A HAVEN. FOR THOSE IN BETWEEN, OPINIONS WILL VARY WITH CIRCUMSTANCE. SCIENTISTS WILL MEASURE US IN TERMS OF OUR BRAIN TRUST, AUTHORS AND ARTISTS IN TERMS OF OUR FREEDOM OF CREATIVITY AND THE FAITHFUL IN TERMS OF OUR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. AGE AND EDUCATION ARE ADDITIONAL FACTORS. A FAIR NUMBER OF THE OLDER GENERATION WHICH LIVED THROUGH THE PURGES (THE "ZDANOVSHCHINA" AND THE LENINGRAD AFFAIR IN PARTICULAR) ARE EITHER INTIMIDATED OR BRAINWASHED, WHILE SOVIET STUDENTS HAVE A NATURAL TENDENCY TO COLLECT EVERYTHING WESTERN--FROM FASHIONS TO RECORDS TO IDEAS.  
THE COMPETITIVE AMERICAN SETS THE PACE

10. WHATEVER THEIR INTERESTS AND POINTS OF VIEW, THOSE SOVIETS WHO LOOK OUTWARD USE THE UNITED STATES AS THE STANDARD BY WHICH THEY MEASURE THEIR OWN PROGRESS. THEY MAY EXPRESS ADMIRATION FOR WEST EUROPEAN OR JAPANESE EFFICIENCY, TECHNOLOGY OR

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

83 0863220 SCR

PAGE 005  
TOR: 010328Z APR 83

NC 0863220

CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT THEIR PENCHANT FOR THINKING BIG MAKES THE U.S. THE ONLY REAL STANDARD OF COMPARISON.

11. IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE COMPARISON IS QUITE EXPLICIT. MOST LECTURES ON THE SOVIET UNION'S INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE LITTLE MORE THAN AN UPDATING OF THE SCORE IN U.S.-SOVIET COMPETITION FOR WORLD INFLUENCE. EXPLICIT COMPARISONS ARE DRAWN, TOO, WITH RESPECT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. LECTURERS OFTEN CITE STATISTICS WHICH SHOW THEY HAVE SURPASSED THE U.S. IN COAL, OIL AND STEEL PRODUCTION. THEY ALSO REFER TO AREAS WHERE THEY LAG WELL BEHIND US, SUCH AS LABOR PRODUCTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY. THEY USE THESE LATTER COMPARISONS AS AN EXHORTATION TO DO BETTER.

12. WE SUSPECT THAT THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX THAT OVER THE YEARS HAS BEEN SO EVIDENT IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH MORE ADVANCED COUNTRIES WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VEHEMENCE WITH WHICH THEY REACTED TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S COUNTER-PROPAGANDA INITIATIVES. THEY QUICKLY IDENTIFIED THE "CRUSADE" AGAINST THEM, NOT WITH THE HISTORICAL PARALLEL OF THE HOLY LAND IN THE 11TH AND 13TH CENTURES, BUT IN TERMS OF THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE WITH THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS WHO WERE DEFEATED IN THE LEGENDARY BATTLE ON LAKE PEIPUS IN 1242 BY THE NATIONAL HERO ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY. THIS APPEAL TO RUSSIAN NATIONALISM WAS EMPLOYED SUCCESSFULLY BY STALIN IN WORLD WAR II.

13. THE SOVIET SENSE OF INFERIORITY TENDED TO RECEDE AS SOVIET CITIZENS, WHETHER RIGHTLY OR NOT, HAVE COME TO BELIEVE THAT IN SOME RESPECTS THEIR SYSTEM IS SUPERIOR TO OURS. FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN AFTER ALLOWING FOR THE EFFECT OF SOVIET PROPAGANDA AND THE RESTRICTION ON INFORMATION, MOST LENINGRADERS SEEM TO THINK THEIR ECONOMY IS BETTER THAN OURS IN

PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT AND SCHOOLING. THEY FIND THE PREVALENCE OF CRIME AND DRUGS IN THE U.S. APPALLING. THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND OUR PERMISSIVENESS. THE CONSIDERABLE SOVIET MEDIA PLAY ON RACISM OFTEN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

83 0863220 SCR

PAGE 006  
TOR: 010328Z APR 83

NC 0863220

FALLS ON DEAF EARS BECAUSE THE SLAVS  
ARE THEMSELVES QUITE RACIST.

THE AFFLUENT AMERICAN--THE BASIC IMAGE REMAINS

14. IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING LISTED ABOVE, THE PEOPLE OF LENINGRAD RETAIN A BASIC IMAGE OF THE U.S. AS A LAND OF MILK AND HONEY. THEIR GOVERNMENT HAS FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO INSULATE THEM FROM ALL WESTERN IDEAS AND INFLUENCES, INCLUDING THOSE THAT WE IN THE CONSULATE SEEK TO PURVEY. OUR USIA EXHIBIT IS RARELY WITHOUT AN AUDIENCE, WHICH ONLY INCREASED AFTER WE WERE FORCED TO ERECT A BARRIER TO GUARD PEDESTRIANS AGAINST FALLING PLASTER. ONE OFTEN IS ASKED BY SOVIETS WHETHER THINGS IN THE U.S. ARE AS BAD AS THEY ARE PORTRAYED IN THE SOVIET MEDIA. FROM THEIR TONE OF VOICE IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY EXPECT TO BE REASSURED "IT ISN'T SO!"

15. CHILDREN REMAIN IMPERVIOUS TO THE PLOYS USED TO MANIPULATE THEIR ELDERS, FLOCKING EAGERLY TO SEE AMERICAN CARS OR TO OBTAIN AMERICAN SOUVENIRS. TEENAGERS, YOUNG ADULTS, AND EVEN AN OCCASIONAL STAIT MATRON, CONTINUE TO SEEK OUT SELLERS OF AMERICAN APPAREL. OUR MOVIES DRAW LARGE AUDIENCES AND OUR JAZZ AND ROCK MUSIC ARE TREASURED AND EMULATED.

16. THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT PERHAPS IS THAT OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES, WHO ENJOY AFFECTING AN AIR OF DISDAIN FOR THINGS AMERICAN, ARE UNDISGUISEDLY SMITTEN BY U.S. CONSUMER GOODS. THE BELIEF THAT MOST AMERICANS HAVE GREAT WEALTH HAS SURVIVED THE RELENTLESS PROPAGANDA ON UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY. ONE CONSULATE EMPLOYEE, AFTER SEEING A U.S. FILM AT A LOCAL THEATER, NOTED WITH INTEREST THAT A MAN IN IT OWNED A SMALL HELICOPTER. HE ACCEPTED THIS AS NOTHING UNUSUAL FOR LIFE IN THE U.S. IT WAS OBVIOUSLY PART OF HIS OWN FANTASY OF AMERICA.

17. OUR ADMITTEDLY IMPRESSIONISTIC EVALUATION,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STATE

PAGE 007

NC 0863220

TOR: 010328Z APR 83

...THE LENINGRAD PUBLIC, BESET BY  
...DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION,  
...ECONOMY AND FRIGHTENED BY  
...HAS RESPONDED MORE ACTIVELY OF  
...PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN BLAMING THE  
...THE COUNTRY'S ILLS. THIS GENERAL  
...COULD REPRESENT A RESURGENCE OF

...A PRO-AMERICAN STREAK  
...MANY RUSSIANS. BASIC  
...OUR COUNTRY AND A SENSE OF WONDER  
...REMAIN INTACT AND  
...EVEN THE MOST  
...OF AMERICA.

...CALLED THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE OUR  
...WITHOUT EXAGGERATING ITS IMPORTANCE,  
...RUSSIAN ATTRACTION TO AMERICA CAN WORK  
...IT WON'T CAUSE  
...EVEN RUSSIAN POLICY GREATLY, AT  
...BUT IT IS A MOOD TO BE

CONFIDENTIAL